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IN THE PATHS OF THE POETS

BY MARGUERITE TRACY.

With original illustrations by A. C. Howland.



ON GREEN RIVER.

Busy, practical New England and New York have been strangely rich in poets, and the artists who go sketching through those regions are always rediscovering some spot that Bryant, Whittier, or Lowell has marked with a white stone.

Every one who loves nature is drawn by Bryant's exquisite "Green River" until the description seems too full of

the elusive charm of dreams to be ever found winding through its beautiful banks in a trance of song, for the poet has one advantage over the artist. He appeals directly to the imagination, and when he pens a picture, if his words make any impression at all they rouse the reader's own conception of color and form to clothe his idea, while the artist, using his own forms and colors, touches the imagination through the eyes with a tangible picture that is not always sympathetic. On the other hand, when there is a sentiment to be expressed, if the artist conveys it at all, it goes straight to the heart, unheld by words that sometimes give different ideas to different minds.



A LONG ISLAND SOUVENIR.

Mr. Howland wanders over all the varied country, finding something picturesque in every place, for, as he says, "it does not matter where you go;" and everywhere he strikes the note which makes the picture typical. One may search Long Island almost from end to end



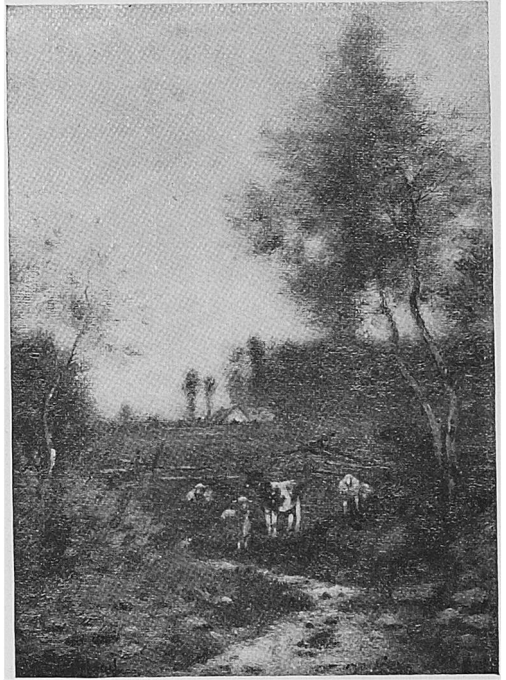
ON THE CAMPUS, ITHACA, N. Y.

without discovering a view across the plains or on the hills without a church-spire, and the old rail fences that have stood through many generations of the farmers still bound the fields. It is on Long Island that the farmers cling to Tory names of pence and shillings, and ignore with conservative superiority the fact that they are handling a decimal currency the while. In Roslyn, on the north shore of the island, where Bryant's old home stands, one might easily forget America, for the rail fences dis-

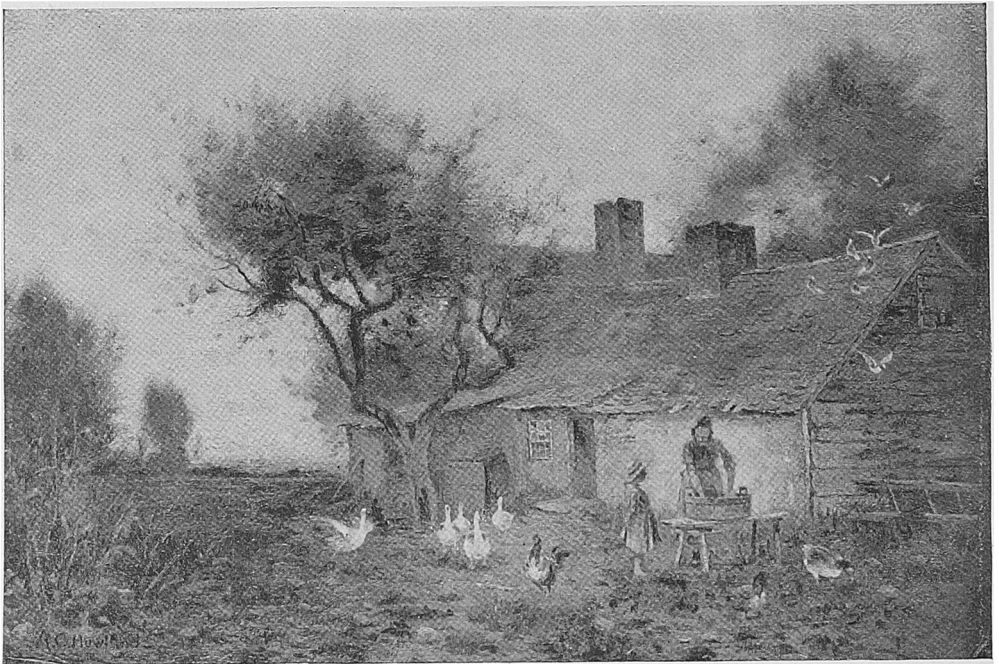
appear, the green velvet lawns slope down in perfect terraces, one enters private grounds only after passing by an ivy-covered lodge, the road dips down between high stone walls, and the trees are trimmed.

But Mr. Howland does not paint these un-American aspects any more than Whittier or Bryant wrote them. His farm-scenes are not merely faithful pictures, for the sentiment in all of them recalls the sweetness that the poets found, and the soft autumn and twilight effects, of which he is fondest, lend grace to a landscape that is capable of much sternness.

The glimpses of homely country figures that he gives are like Miss Wilkin's; they cannot be commonplace, since each one lives and has its individuality, and the artist or writer who recognizes the individuality of place or person usually sees its poetry as well. The spirit of poetry is the spirit which sees things separate and wonderfully made in themselves, and yet in a larger sense so alike that they blend as equal factors in the mysterious universe.



NEAR DIANA'S BATH, WILLIAMSTOWN.



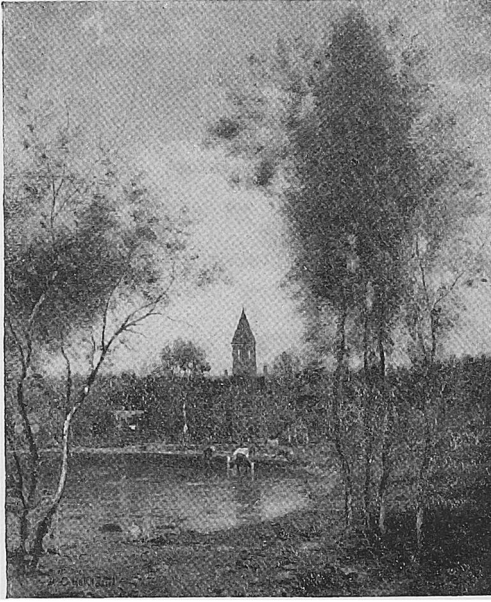
AN AUTUMN EVENING.



THE COTTAGE BY THE CREEK.

That place is fortunate which has artists and poets to clothe its homeliest necessities in beauty and bring its skies a little closer to the watchers underneath ; but it has ever been and ever will be the hard countries that give the poets to the world.

The New Englands, Scotlands, Norways, Swedens—all the strong relentless places—incite the mind by throwing it back upon itself ; they inspire the imagination without satisfying it, and it is only in creating poetry and art that the chil-



WELLS COLLEGE.

dren of these countries find release. Even those who are free from these primitive conditions feel the atmosphere that has been created by them, and see the land in a gracious aspect that is not real, but the mirage of centuries of longing and of noble thought.

Winter finds Mr. Howland remote from his well-loved hills and streams in a city studio, but even there he surrounds himself with curious memories and suggestions of the country in the shape of enormous grasshoppers, tarantulas that never were on sea or land, the skull of a large alligator and other pleasing creatures, on walls and tables and chairs.

On the day, however, that I had the pleasure of examining these things Mr. Howland told me that the studio was quite bare, much of the collection having been sent to the Century Club for their Twelfth Night decorations; and, in fact, Mr. Howland was interrupted at work, not on one of the landscapes for which he is known in the world, but on a little sketch of certain phases of city life for the unique "art attractions" of that same celebration.

There is something very delightful to see in the way that from time to time these grave workers and thinkers release themselves from all but the amusing sides of the questions of life, and feel as care-free as in the green pathways of summer and boyhood.



AN OLD FARMHOUSE AT SUNSET.